

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-4 and 10-11 have been amended; and Claims 14 and 15 are new. Basis for the amendments and new claims can be found throughout the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

TRANSLATION OF JP 2000-9966

The Examiner has requested a translation and analysis of JP 2000-9966 to eliminate references JP 2000-43537 and JP 2000-43536.

These references are available to the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102a/103 because the date of publication is less than one year from the filing of the present application. The filing date of the JP 2000-9966 priority application is January 13, 2000, which is prior to the publication of these two references. Thus, in order to overcome these references, the Applicants can perfect the claim to priority by filing an English translation of the priority document. The Examiner has not rejected claims based on these documents and Applicants believe that amended Claim 1 clearly distinguishes over these references and, thus, a translation is not required.

Regarding additional prior art, Applicants believe all of the relevant prior art is known by the Examiner.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-4, 10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The claims have been amended to overcome the rejection.

Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined teaches of either USP 5,899,262 or JP 11-254944 and JP 10-58947 and JP 5-280802. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to better define the present invention. In amended Claim 1, a first spacing between the door in a center of the air passage and the grill member is equal to or greater than a second spacing between the edge of the opening and the door. This is defined in the specification on Page 22, lines 16-25. None of the prior art discloses this relationship between the spacing at the center and the spacing at the edge of the opening.

Thus, Applicants believe Claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguish over the art of record. Likewise, Claims 2, 3, 10, and 12, which ultimately depend from Claim 1, are also believed to patentably distinguish over the art of record.

Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 4 defines the elastic pressing members 26e as comprising a plurality of slender elastic pressing means extending parallel with the sliding direction (a) of the

sliding door 26 and they are disposed only at positions facing the edges of the opening and the grill member. None of the prior art cited by the Examiner discloses this feature.

Thus, Applicants believe Claim 4, as amended, patentably distinguish over the art of record.

Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIMS

New Claims 13 and 14 are dependent claim dependent on Claims 1 and 4, respectively, and are, thus, believed to be allowable. Applicants believe Claims 13 and 14 read on the elected species.

REJOINDER

Applicants respectfully request the rejoinder of withdrawn Claims 9 and 11.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this

application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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